

"A Stout Scout!"

Text: Numbers 13:30,

"And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."

Scripture: Numbers 13:26 - 14:10

Those of you who can remember the comedy team of Abbott and Costello, can recall the routine they had that involved a play on words. For instance, Abbott would use a word that had several meanings and in his usage of it, Costello became completely confused. So using this same formula this morning, and speaking about the word stout, let me put it in the same framework as Bud Abbott formerly did and say, "When I speak of 'A Stout Scout', I am not speaking of A STOUT Scout, I am speaking of 'A ~~Stout~~ Scout." You may be confused by all of this, but if I would explain that the word stout, is mostly thought of in terms of obesity or ~~fx~~ being fat. But "stout" can also mean a very solid, upright, doing the right thing at the right time sort of person. This is the type of Stout Scout I have in mind. And since today is Boy Scout Sunday, I believe it is apropos that we think along the lines of Stout Scouts, to emphasize not only to our Boy Scouts, but to all of us, that Stout Scouts is what we all should be.

In our Scripture this morning we read of the spies or scouts, who came back to the Israelite camp and made their report to Moses and the people. Perhaps in order to completely understand what is going on we must backtrack a little in the Scripture. If we go to the beginning of the 13th chapter we read that God speaks to Moses and tells him to send out spies or scouts to scout the land of Canaan which God is giving to them. Moses is commanded to send a man from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Not only was each tribe to be represented by the selection of a man as a scout, but each of the men selected was to be a leader in that tribe. The mediocre tribe members and those who were of little account were passed by, and only men ~~xxxx~~ who were outstanding in their tribe were chosen. Among these men were Caleb and Joshua. So we read the instructions that Moses gives to these men, vs 17b-20.

So they went up into the mountain and into the new lands stretching before them to search it out. And we read vs 23. The emphasis here is upon the fact that the xx territory was very rich and fertile, and conducive to growing things. The scouts were gone 40 days (vs 25), and they now return to make their report to Moses.

First we read of the majority report which is made by 10 of the 12 who went. They explain that the land is very rich and fertile, and they point to the huge cluster of grapes they have brought back. But they caution, vss 28-29. Thus they are sounding a note of warning that the people who dwell there are to be feared and much bigger and stronger than the Israelites.

Then in verse 30 we read the minority report by Caleb. This is the same report which Joshua agrees with but does not state. Speculation on this subject is that since Joshua was so closely aligned with Moses, he did not involve himself in the report, since he knew the people would expect him to make a positive report. But Caleb speaks and says, vs30b. But his report is interrupted by the majority who retell again of the large stature of the people who live there, and how it would be a mistake to tangle with them. Our Scripture then goes on to report that the people mourned and lamented that night and turned away from God, regretting the day they had left Egypt. They even went so far as to think in terms of selecting a leader to take them back to Egypt.

All of this stunned Moses and Aaron so, that they fell on their faces before the people, not because of their fear of the people, but for fear of what God could do to them for their disobedience. It is at this point that we read of Joshua joining with Caleb and trying to reason with them about this thing. Joshua and Caleb seek to convince them that these people will be given over into their hands if they continue to follow the leading of God. But the people will not hear of it and sought to stone them to death, and only the intervention of God appearing at the Tabernacle, saves them from the wrath of the people. If we read on in this Scripture we find that God is angry with the people and would destroy them completely, but because of the intercession

of Mose this does not take place.

Now from all of this we can readily see that there are two factions involved. One is the majority faction which is completely negative in its thinking. And the other is the minority faction which is completely positive in its thinking. The majority group would have them cringe and cower away from the people who are living next door to them. The minority group would have them reach out beyond right into the very place that the majority fears. The majority group would have them pull up stakes and desert all of this land and go back to the slavery of Egypt. The minority group would have them attack the so called strong people before them and move out in faith, believing that God will be sufficient for all their needs.

Times have not changed too greatly since this was first written by Moses. we still are surrounded by the vast majority who cringe and cower at the least sign of adversity. We hear the voices of gloom and doom all around us telling us that all is lost and there is no hope. What the world needs today more than at any other time is more "Stout Scouts". "Stout Scouts" who will stand out against the harbingers of gloom and who will show forth positively in word and action that God is still on the throne, and that we can still overcome, but only in His name.

Christopher Columbus fought this battle with his sailors day after day. When each day passed and no land appeared, his men threatened to mutiny and tried to persuade him to turn back. He refused their requests and entered in his log book each day, two words, "Sailed On."

General Douglas MacArthur refused to take his enforced retreat from Bataan and Corregidor as the final answer in World War II and stated, "I shall Return." Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." This is the stand we need to take. Too long the church of Jesus Christ has been filled with those of a dissenting or negative voice. Too long we have heard so called Christian people exclaim, "It can't be done." Or, "we tried that once and it didn't work." Or, "it will never work in this church," or some other such trite phrases. It is time we removed the word "Can't" from our vocabulary and ~~insert~~ insert

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
BUTLER, PENNSYLVANIA
Boy Scout Sunday FEBRUARY 9, 1975
REV. RALPH C. LINK, PASTOR
MRS. MARILYN STEPHENSON, ORGANIST
MR. RALPH COOPER, CHOIR DIRECTOR
NANCY LINK, ELLEN MASTER - ACOLYTES

ORDER OF WORSHIP 11:00 A.M.
PRELUDE MUSIC: "PASTORALE IN C" WELV
 "SABBATH MORN" HELLER

SILENT PRAYER
*PROCESSIONAL HYMN No. 43 "WHEN MORNING GILDS THE SKIES"
*ASCRPTION - CHORAL AMEN
*EXHORTATION
*CONFESSION (IN UNISON) "ALMIGHTY AND MOST MERCIFUL FATHER,
FROM WHO COMETH DOWN EVERY GOOD AND PERFECT GIFT; WE
YIELD THEE PRAISE AND THANKS FOR ALL THY MERCIES. THY
GOODNESS HATH CREATED US; THY BOUNTY HATH SUSTAINED US;
THY FATHERLY DISCIPLINE HATH CHASTENED AND CORRECTED US;
THY PATIENCE HATH BORNE WITH US; THY LOVE HATH REDEEMED
US. GIVE US A HEART TO LOVE AND SERVE THEE, AND ENABLE
US TO SHOW OUR THANKFULNESS FOR ALL THE GOODNESS AND
MERCY THOU HAST CONFERRED BY GIVING UP OURSELVES TO THY
SERVICE, AND CHEERFULLY SUBMITTING IN ALL THINGS TO THY
BLESSED WILL. AMEN."
*KYRIE (CHOIR, CONGREGATION AND PASTOR)
*ASSURANCE OF PARDON - CHORAL AMEN
*PRAISE
*PASTOR: 'O LORD OPEN OUR LIPS.
*PEO-LE: AND OUR MOUTH SHALL SHOW FORTH THY PRAISE
*DOXOLOGY No. 551
SCRIPTURE LESSON: NUMBERS 13:26 - 14:10
HYMN No. 461 "SAVIOUR, LIKE A SHEPHERD LEAD US"
*AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH (APOSTLES' CREED)
*GLORIA PATRI
*CALL TO PRAYER
*PASTOR: THE LORD BE WITH YOU.
*PEOPLE: AND WITH THY SPIRIT.
*PASTOR: LET US PRAY.
PRAYER AND PRAYER RESPONSE

OFFERING "MELODY IN G" GUILMONT
OFFERTORY
DEDICATION OF UNDERSHEPHERDS
RE-DEDICATION OF GOD AND COUNTRY SCOUTS
SCOUT OATH
ANTHEM: "BLESSED JESUS" ANEURIN BODYCOMBE
SERMON: "A STROUT SCOUT!"
PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER
*HYMN OF DEDICATION No. 393 "O BROTHER MAN"
*BENEDICTION AND THREE FOLD AMEN
POSTLUDE: "O MAGNIFY THE LORD" NORDMAN

*CONGREGATION STANDING -----
THE LOVELY FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR HAVE BEEN PLACED BY
MR. & MRS. ROBERT PAYNE IN MEMORY OF "PARENTS".
SERVING AS USHERS TODAY ARE: *WALLY FEDER, JOHN SNOW,
MONT MACKINNEY, JAMES MALONEY, STEVE VARGO.
DEACONESS MRS. JOAN MASTER WILL REPRESENT COUNCIL
AT THE DOOR TODAY.
NURSERY IS PROVIDED TODAY BY: MRS. VICKIE HOBT AND
LYNNE BOSKO.
THE ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY WAS 189.
MON. - JR. DIV. OF BASKETBALL - 8:30 VS. ST. ANDREWS.
TUES. - BEELINE FASHION SHOW - UNDERCROFT - 7:30 -
MODELS WILL BE FROM THE CHURCH AND WILL BENEFIT THE
ARC CLASS. \$50.00 OUTFIT WILL BE GIVEN TO THE PERSON
WITH THE HIGHEST SALES OVER \$100. EVERYONE IS WELCOME
AND ENCOURAGED TO BRING A GUEST.
WED. - ASH WEDNESDAY - HOLY COMMUNION (ALTAR) 7:30
THURS. - 10:30 - MARY MARTHA CIRCLE WILL MEET AT CHURCH.
SAT. - JR. DIV. OF BASKETBALL VS. MERIDIAN 2:00 P.M.
SAT. - 7:00 - SWEETHEART DINNER-DANCE - AT THE
SAXONBURG FIRE HALL. EVERYONE IN THE CHURCH IS
INVITED, HOWEVER, TICKETS MUST BE PICKED UP TODAY
IN THE OFFICE - SEE BEA TAIT OR CONTACT THE WAYNE
DEANERS. PORK TURKEYS OR ROAST BEEF, FRUIT COCKTAIL,
TOSSED SALAD, BAKED POTATO, CORN AND PIE. \$5.15 TOTAL.
THERE WILL BE A SHORT MEETING AFTER SERVICE TODAY -
FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE UNDER SHEPHERDS PICKING UP
LENTEN MATERIAL - ALL MATERIAL WILL BE IN THE HANDS
OF THE CONGREGATION BY ASH WEDNESDAY.
THURS. - FEB. 20 - 6:30 - BUTLER AREA LAYMAN'S DINNER
AT OUR CHURCH - SEE BOB TAIT, J. W. HARMON FOR TICKETS.
J. BRENNAN WILL BE GUEST SPEAKER.
ALTAR FLOWERS - OPEN - FEB. 16, 23 - SEE BEA OFFICE.
WELCOME VISITORS. JOHN CAROL
"GODS ONE ANTHEM"

major would have pull stakes desert go bak Egy 2
and slavery
minor would have attack so called strong peop B4
(em & move out in faith, Believe G siffi 4 all need
Times no change 2 great since Mos
We still surr by vast maj who cringe/cower least
si adversity.
W hear voices gloom/doom all round tell all lost
no hope
What world need now more than ever/Stout Scouts
St. Sc. who stand gainst harbingers gloom
who will show 4th positiv word/deed,
& show G still on throne/can still overcome,
but only His name.
Chris Columbus fought this battle day after day
his sailors want mutiny/turn around.
He refuse write in log 2 word, "Sailed On."
Gen. Doug MacArthur refused give up after Bataan
Corregidor.
He say when left, I Shall Return.
Js said, Bcause I live, ye shall live also."
This stand we need take.
2 long ch. Js Xp been filled those dissent neg voice
2 long we herd voice so called Xpian peop exclaim,
"It can't be done, we tried that once, it will never
work in this church," or other trite phr,se
It time we remove CAN'T from vocabulary & insert
SHALL
Ch Js Xp not founded by group sissified mamby pam-
bys who quiver/shake least threat or difficulty.
Ch found by minority who never knew word CAN'T
Re story founding of ch, & U read men threatened
at every turn
& yet they astounded/astonished known world in the
face of literal death.
Let those among us B negative if they so choose,
But let those among us who want to B positive,
stand 4th against negativism & overcome it.
(Illustration 2 artists paint glory ch & fall Xpiani
Shirley I stood vast caths, London/Paris
Saw/felt coldness, negativism there. Booths sellin
Lt no shine altar, cross, open Bible
This diff tween maj sc in world & those Stout Scout
t easy foll maj sc who cringe shudder enormity of
task, bcause take no effort do so
But 2 join ranks minor sc or St.Sc. means put 4th
effort by faith/prepartion. In life St Sc Js shine
He live within. Which will B U me? Read text

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fore Moses, and said, Let us go up at once and
possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."

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Abbott/Costello routine

When say, I speak of Stout Scout, I am not speaking
of a Stout Scout, I am speaking of A Stout, Scout.
U may B confused all this, but stout not only mean
obese/fat,
but, solid/upright/do rt thing rt time etc.
2day B.Sc Sun, & Stout Scouts shud all B
In scrip red spies/scouts came bak Is camp & report
Baktrak to beg 13 chap & G speak Mos,
tell him send out spies/scouts 2 Canaan
12 sc, 1ea tribe Is, all leaders
Medioc men pass by, these men outstand
Joshua Caleb selected

READ VSS 17b - 20.

So they went up mtns land stretch B4 them, 2 search
We READ VS 23, 24

READ VS 25

gone 40 days, & now bak 2 make report
1st is maj report made by 10 of 12.
told land rich/fertile, & point 2 huge clus grapes
But caution READ VSS 28,29

Sound note of warning peop big/strong/2B feared

VS 30, Caleb give minority report

Joshua also agree but no say Bcause he close Moses
Caleb report interrupt by maj who retell story
(AD 31-33)

Peop morned/lamented lv Egypt

went so far as choose leader take bak Egypt
Mos Aaron stunned, fall on faces B4 G. 4 fear
what G will do

Josh/Caleb try reason with peop that G give land
& peop over 2 them if obey Him

But peop no hear this & sought stone them
But G intervene by appear at Taber, & this save them
We read G angry would destroy peop but Mos interced

From all this we C 2 faction involved

1 majority, & complete nega in think
her minor, complete positive in think
Major group have cower/cringe from peop liv next
minor group " reach rt into place major fear

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
 Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
 Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.